

## Warden Message

### U.S. Embassy Warsaw

October 22, 2009



### H1N1 flu update

This Warden Message alerts U.S. citizens to the latest information regarding human cases of 2009-H1N1 influenza, sometimes referred to as novel H1N1 or swine flu.

On June 11, 2009, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a global pandemic of novel influenza A (2009-H1N1) and raised the worldwide pandemic alert level to Phase 6. Since the WHO pandemic declaration, the new 2009-H1N1 virus has continued to spread. Unlike avian influenza (H5N1), the disease caused by this strain of the influenza virus is far less severe, with a mortality rate similar to that of seasonal influenza, and most people who become ill recover without requiring medical treatment. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the symptoms of 2009-H1N1 influenza are like other types of influenza, and include fever, sore throat, runny nose, cough, body aches, and may include vomiting and diarrhea. According to the CDC, there is no evidence to suggest that 2009-H1N1 influenza is transmitted by eating properly cooked pork products.

Notwithstanding the low mortality rate, the U.S. Government continues to monitor the situation and disseminate information to U.S. citizen communities as the possibility of a severe influenza pandemic resulting from changes in the 2009-H1N1 virus or the emergence of an even newer influenza virus remains.

The Polish Chief Sanitary Inspectorate (Główny Inspektorat Sanitarny) announced that as of October 20, 2009, 166 cases of H1N1 have been confirmed on Polish territory, although it is likely the number of H1N1 cases in Poland is far higher. As the situation is quickly evolving, please check the following websites regularly for the most up-to-date information:

the [State Department's website](#) ;  
the [CDC's website](#);  
the [U.S. Government's federal influenza website](#);  
the [World Health Organization's website](#); and  
the [Polish Chief Sanitary Inspectorate website](#).

For more information on how to prepare for a severe pandemic, please see the State Department's "Pandemic Influenza Fact Sheet" and "Options During a Pandemic" flyer, both located at [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov).

Due to legal restrictions and a lack of sufficient resources, the Embassy is not in a position to provide private citizens with pandemic-related supplies, medications, or medical treatment, including vaccines, and cannot provide specific medical advice. Questions and concerns about influenza or other illnesses should be directed to a medical professional. The website of the U.S. Embassy in Poland maintains a [list of local doctors and medical facilities](#).

Any U.S. citizen who chooses not to return to the United States via commercial means at the onset of a severe pandemic may have to remain abroad for the duration of the pandemic due to transportation disruptions and border closures. Those who choose to wait out a severe pandemic abroad are therefore urged to maintain adequate provisions for an infection wave or waves that could last from two to twelve weeks. U.S. citizens who travel abroad

during the current 2009-H1N1 pandemic may face screening measures, isolation, or quarantine as local public health authorities seek to contain the spread of the virus and treat sick travelers.

U.S. citizens residing or traveling in Poland are encouraged to register with the Embassy through the State Department's [travel registration website](#), to obtain updated travel and security information. U.S. citizens without Internet access may register directly with the Embassy. Registration is important; it allows the Embassy and the State Department to assist you in an emergency.

If you have additional questions or concerns, you may contact the U.S. Consulate's American Citizen Services unit either by telephone at (48) (12) 4245122 or e-mail at [krakowacs@state.gov](mailto:krakowacs@state.gov). The after-hours telephone number is (48) 601483348. The U.S. Consulate in Krakow is located at Stolarska 9.